

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel pending claims 10-27 without prejudice.

Please add the following new claims 28-37:

28. (New) A method for producing plants or parts thereof having increased tolerance against drought, fungal infections, increased salt concentrations or extreme temperature, and showing essentially normal growth, comprising:

- (a) transforming a plant, a plant tissue, or a plant cell with a nucleic acid which encodes a virus-encoded transport protein;
- (b) regenerating at least one transgenic plant from the transformed plant, plant tissue, or plant cell;
- (c) testing each transgenic plant from step (b) to identify transgenic plants having increased tolerance against drought, fungal infections, increased salt concentrations or extreme temperature and showing essentially normal growth; and
- (d) using each transgenic plant identified in step (c) to produce at least one transgenic plant line, plant, plant part, or plant cell having increased tolerance against drought, fungal infections, increased salt concentrations or extreme temperature and showing essentially normal growth.

29. (New) The method of Claim 28, wherein the virus-encoded transport protein is the potato leaf roll virus (PLRV) transport protein pr17 or a derivative thereof.

30. (New) The method of Claim 29, wherein the derivative is a PLRV pr17 protein with a hydrophilic N-terminal extension.

31. (New) The method of Claim 30, wherein the hydrophilic N-terminal extension is the amino acid sequence MAELGSGSELHRGGGRSRTS (SEQ ID NO: 1).

32. (New) The method of Claim 28 wherein the increased tolerance against fungal infections is an increased tolerance against infections with *Phytophthora infestans*.